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Troubled CIA in Webster's 'cautious' grip

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During the Korean War, William Webster was executive officer on a Navy tanker whose home port was Pearl Harbor — across from the sunken USS Arizona, tomb for 1,103 sailors.

"Being there," he recalls, "you couldn't help but think of the people who had given so much to keep our country the way it is today."

Few would deny that since then, he's done his part.

Tuesday, the 63-year-old Webster was sworn in to head the CIA, replacing William Casey, who died May 8.

"We will diligently carry out our assignments around the world — however difficult," he said after his oath.

His appointment follows nine years as FBI head. In 1971, he gave up a \$120,000 corporate-lawyer salary for a \$40,000 federal judgeship in his native St. Louis.

With his megabuck potential in private industry, what keeps him in public service?

"I'm sure it's his patriotism," says Rep. Don Edwards, D-Calif., who plays tennis with Webster.

The CIA assignment won't be a holiday. The agency is

His views on spying

USA spies: "We are confronted with a new breed — a breed of volunteer spies who are motivated primarily by their own greed."

Soviet agents: "They have adapted their recruitment techniques to appeal to the worst in human nature. They call it the 'typical American attitude toward money' — an attitude that says that it's OK to sell anything if the price is right."

Anti-spy efforts: "These troubled '80s have been a time of success and disappointment. ... Each agency must continue to improve its response."

rocked by questions of improprieties in the Iran-contra scandal, as the FBI in the 1960s and '70s was accused of illegal surveillance of political dissenters.



By Doug Mills, UPI

NEW DIRECTOR: William Webster after he was sworn in Tuesday as the head of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Webster pulled the FBI back to respectability, and President Reagan is hoping for the same at the CIA. The White House hasn't named an FBI replacement.

The ACLU's Morton Halperin said Webster's style may help at the CIA: "He's cautious and careful, and he has a respect for the law."

But the nation's top spy is hardly a James Bond type.

He's a private man — always addressed as "Judge."

Still, he likes to sit in the front seat beside the driver of his official car.

A non-smoker who rarely drinks, he's a father of three and a devout Christian Scientist like his wife, Drusilla, who died of cancer in 1984.

Webster's background will be refreshing, says spy expert James Bamford: "He's seen there is a world out there, outside the CIA."

— Sam Meddis